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# Week 1—Getting Started

## The Basics

Many English classes cover the basics of writing a paper. You all know the rules by now: begin your paper with a thesis statement, give three paragraphs of supporting evidence, then wrap up with a conclusion. Good advice, but the process of writing a research paper actually begins several steps earlier. You should have six things in hand before you start writing:

A research statement

Three to six subtopics to explore

A thesis statement

A collection of supporting evidence

A conclusion

Citation information for all your sources

This class helps you through the agonizing process of getting started in college-level research and writing. Nearly everybody, even professional researchers, feel overwhelmed when given a research assignment. There's just too much to handle. Topics! Sources! Evaluation! Synthesis! Citation! Research becomes less intimidating if you break the process down, step by step.

Start with a **research statement**. A research statement is a rough idea of a topic you want to write about. (It's not the same thing as a thesis statement; keep reading for more detail.) The research statement is for you and you alone; no one else ever has to see it. It can be just one word ("Mars", "Copper", "Periodontology") or it can be a complete sentence ("My paper is about the interaction between prophyllids and howler monkeys in pre-Columbian Mesoamerica"). The point is to help organize your thinking by nailing down a topic of interest to you.

Next, make a list of **subtopics** to explore. These subtopics fall under the broad heading of your research statement. If you chose the research statement "Mars", for example, then your list of subtopics to explore might include "Geology of Mars", "History of Mars Exploration", "Is There Life on Mars?" and "Mars in Mythology". Your research statement guides your research for the entire paper; your subtopics guide your research for particular pages in the paper, or even particular paragraphs. **Warning: you should be able to come up with at least three subtopics. (Personally, I like to have five.) If you can't think of three specific areas to explore within the scope of your research statement, then your statement is too narrow and you won't be able to write a lengthy paper about it. Go back and rewrite your research statement to make it broader. Alternatively, you may be thinking of dozens of subtopics and it's hard to know which ones to write about. In this case, rewrite the research statement to make it narrower.** You want to have a good grip on your research before you start writing the paper. Nothing

is more irritating than trying to finish an assignment the night before it's due, only to realize you have nothing to say.

## Outlining

We're going to spend most of the course talking about how to do research to support your basic argument, but let me skip ahead briefly, to the point just before you're ready to start writing.

You know what you want to write about, you've gathered some information, and you're ready to begin typing. **DON'T START WRITING YET!** Some people—professional journalists, mostly—can write a coherent, well-organized paper in one draft. These magical people know instinctively how to present their research in the clearest and most convincing way. Normal humans need to create a plan for the paper first.

The *MLA Handbook* offers a section (pages 44-45) on creating a formal outline for a research paper. This kind of outlining takes you one step beyond your research statement and subtopics. The outline lays out the paper in great detail, from the thesis statement at the beginning to the conclusion at the end. The outline includes all the subtopics you will be writing about, defines what order you will mention them, what evidence you will cite, and what conclusion you will draw at the end of the paper.

The **thesis statement** explains what your paper is trying to prove or disprove. It must be a complete sentence, and it appears early in your finished paper. It's different from a research statement; a research statement is a helpful note for your personal use, while a thesis statement is a required part of the paper and will be seen by readers.

The **conclusion** is a formal summary of the entire paper. It restates the thesis statement, summarizes the evidence and shows how the evidence supports the statement. A thesis statement defines **WHAT** you intend to prove; a conclusion shows **HOW** you proved it.

Personally, I find formal outlines a little restrictive. I prefer a looser, more general outline that lets me move stuff around and reorganize the paper as I'm writing. (That's also why I like to have five subtopics instead of three; if one or more of the subtopics just don't seem to fit with the flow of the paper, I can leave them out. It's always easier to cut stuff out of a finished paper than to add it in.) I usually lay out my paper down to the page level, but not the paragraph or sentence level. *Writers INC: A Student Handbook for Writing and Learning* (available in your college library!) has an example of this kind of outline (177-178).

I've included an example of an informal outline at the end of this packet.

## Reference Books

**Reference books** are a good place to start your research. They give you fast facts and a broad introduction to a topic, but they don't go into great depth on any one subject and they don't provide much in the way of analysis, opinion or debate. Examples include dictionaries, encyclopedias, almanacs, bibliographies and directories, books of quotations, and atlases.

A **dictionary** is a list of words, usually arranged alphabetically, accompanied by definitions for those words. Standard dictionaries, such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary* and *Random House Dictionary*, give not only a word's meaning but also its pronunciation, etymology (i.e. history and origins) and sometimes an illustration. Specialized dictionaries include rhyming dictionaries, bilingual dictionaries (which translate words from one language into another), and dictionaries that concentrate on scientific, medical, legal or business terms. There are also weird dictionaries that get very little use: lists of commonly misspelled words, dictionaries that arrange words by frequency of use ("the" is the most commonly used word in the English language), and reverse dictionaries, which allow you to look up a definition and find the word that goes with it. (Reverse dictionaries are hard to use and TC library doesn't buy them.)

**Encyclopedias** include general articles on subjects of all kinds, arranged alphabetically by subject. Standard encyclopedias include the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, *Encyclopedia Americana*, *World Book* and *Compton's Encyclopedia*. Specialized encyclopedias are also available. **Note: generally speaking, encyclopedias are not acceptable sources for information in a college-level research paper. You can use one to get started on a topic, and it may direct you to other sources you can use in the paper, but don't rely on an encyclopedia to give you material you can include in your main text.** When using an encyclopedia, always start with the index. Your topic may be scattered across a variety of different articles, and a good index will list them all.

**Almanacs** collect fast facts and lists of interesting data. Want to know the 10 most expensive restaurants on Earth? Who commanded the Prussians at the Battle of Waterloo? How much rain falls on Los Angeles in an average year?

**Bibliographies** list sources of information on various topics. They include citations for books, magazines, newspaper articles, photographs, websites and other materials.

**Directories** work a lot like bibliographies, but instead of books they list people, organizations and offices. The phone book is a directory.

**Books of quotations** gather famous sayings, lines of poetry and clips from speeches, usually arranged by topic.

An **atlas** is a collection of maps, usually grouped by geographic region. A good atlas will include an index and statistical or factual data. Standard atlases give political and geographic information, and sometimes economic data as well. Specialized atlases focus on transportation, geology, biology, history or other aspects of a particular place.

# Assignment 1

Fill in ALL the following spaces. You may use any topic you wish, except “cats”. This is a practice exercise; you DO NOT need to conduct actual research or write a real paper. Since you are not really writing a paper here, the “Editing Phase” of the process has been left out. See the “Informal Outline” at the end of this packet for an example of what the assignment should look like.

**DO YOUR OWN WORK—EVERYONE SHOULD COME UP WITH SOMETHING DIFFERENT!**

## Research Phase

Research statement (your main topic):

Subtopics:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Writing Phase

Thesis statement:

Supporting evidence:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Conclusion:

# Week 1 Quiz

1. To find the height of Mt. Everest, you would look in:
  - A. An atlas
  - B. A directory
  - C. A dictionary
  - D. A bibliography
  
2. To find a list of articles about stamp collecting, you would look in:
  - A. An almanac
  - B. A book of quotations
  - C. A bibliography
  - D. An atlas
  
3. Encyclopedias are good sources for information to include in the main text of your paper.  
TRUE  
FALSE
  
4. How many subtopics should you have before you start your research?
  - A. 1-3
  - B. 2-4
  - C. 3-6
  - D. 10-12
  
5. A research statement is the same thing as a thesis statement.  
TRUE  
FALSE
  
6. The conclusion of a paper:
  - A. Repeats what you said in the thesis statement
  - B. Shows how the evidence supports the thesis statement
  - C. Summarizes the evidence
  - D. All of the above
  
7. This class is about:
  - A. Research
  - B. Writing
  - C. Citation
  - D. All of the above
  
8. The difference between a formal and informal outline is:
  - A. Formal outlines are better
  - B. Formal outlines are more strict about the order and presentation of evidence
  - C. Formal outlines do not include a thesis statement
  - D. Formal outlines are tax-deductible
  
9. A reverse dictionary allows you to:

- A. look up a pronunciation and find its word
- B. look up an etymology and find its word
- C. look up a word and find its definition
- D. look up a definition and find its word

10. "Me" is the most commonly used word in the English language.

TRUE

FALSE

## Week 2—Plagiarism, Copyright Violation, and MLA Style

### Plagiarism and Copyright Violation

Most students have heard of plagiarism and copyright violation, and know that both things can get you into trouble. That said, the knowledge rarely seems to stop anybody. (Trust me on this. I teach school for a living.)

**Plagiarism** means copying someone's work without giving credit to the author. **Copyright violation** means copying someone's work without getting permission first. In both cases, "copying" means a number of things—taking text, film or audio clips directly out of the original work; imitating someone's fundamental ideas; or slightly rephrasing a quotation so that it isn't exactly the same as the original sentence. You can be guilty of either one, both at the same time, or (if you're smart) neither.

Which one is worse? Well, colleges and creative industries (art, movie making, scientific research, technology development) come down hard on plagiarism, because these organizations make their living off of coming up with new and original ideas. Depending on the details of the case, plagiarism can get you expelled from school or sink your career. For examples of this happening, see the famous lawsuit between novelists Nora Roberts and Janet Dailey, after Dailey was caught copying pages out of Roberts's books. The historian Stephen Ambrose also landed in hot water over allegations of plagiarism, though I don't think he was ever sued. **In this class, the penalty for plagiarism is a zero on the assignment or final project.**

Colleges tend to worry less about copyright violation, which is odd, because the penalties for copyright violation are much more severe. Someone who feels their copyright has been infringed can sue for lots of money—federal guidelines suggest \$500,000 per infraction—and can also demand a public apology and the recall of all published work that contains copyrighted material.

So how do you stay out of trouble? Avoiding plagiarism is pretty easy: just be careful to give credit to your sources, using a formal citation style (more on that later). Avoiding copyright violation is trickier—copyright law is horrifyingly complicated and gets worse with every passing day. The only way to make absolutely sure you're safe is to contact the author of the work and request written permission to use the material. However, even if you can't get permission or can't reach the author, you can sometimes still use the material.

### Fair Use

Researchers—particularly students—do have some rights under copyright law.

For one thing, copyright doesn't last forever. Under current American law an author can hold copyright for the entire length of his life, plus 70 years after death. This rule is fairly standard in most first-world countries; the same time period applies in the European Union, Australia and Russia. Many other countries, including Canada, Hong Kong, Japan and New Zealand, still follow a "life plus 50" rule. All materials published in the U.S. before 1923 are automatically in the public domain. (Materials in the

**public domain** are not covered by copyright. They may never have been copyrighted, the copyright may have expired, or they may be a type of material that can't be copyrighted. See the paragraph below.) For a guide to copyright terms under American law, see the additional materials at the end of this packet.

Some things can't be copyrighted. Facts and scientific truths belong to the world as a whole and not to any one person; anyone can quote the exact height of Mt. Whitney without violating copyright. Formulas that express scientific truth are also public property; you can't copyright  $E=mc^2$  or the universal law of gravitation. (You can, however, copyright a formula for a privately developed product. The top-secret formula for Coca Cola is one example.)

Bizarrely, most recipes are also in the public domain, Coca Cola notwithstanding.

Except for postage stamps, virtually anything produced by the United States government belongs to the American people and therefore is in the public domain. (This even applies to money, although there are special rules governing how to copy cash.) State and local governments follow their own rules, but most regard official documents as public property.

Finally, copyright law contains one major exception that allows students and teachers to use copyrighted material for educational purposes. Here is the complete text of the exception:

**§ 107 · Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair use**

Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 106 and 106A, the fair use of a copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or phonorecords or by any other means specified by that section, for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered shall include—

- (1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- (2) the nature of the copyrighted work;
- (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
- (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

The fact that a work is unpublished shall not itself bar a finding of fair use if such finding is made upon consideration of all the above factors.

—*United States Code, Title 17, Chapter 1, Section 107*

In other words, you may use a copyrighted work so long as 1) you aren't making money off of copying it; 2) you're copying only a small part of the document, rather than the whole thing; and 3)

you're not hurting the author's sales by copying their work. If you're not sure whether your particular use of a work falls under the protection Fair Use, Indiana University put together a checklist that might help you—see the additional materials at the end of this packet.

## MLA Style

I keep saying that you have to give credit to all your sources when you write a paper. What does "giving credit" mean, exactly?

It means that other people can find the sources you used. Simply saying "I heard this from some guy in a bar" isn't good enough. You must declare exactly what he said, as well as the guy's name, the date of the conversation, and the fact that you yourself spoke to him in person. Citing the source this way takes the heat off of you—if people who read the finished paper have a problem with what he said, they can track the guy down and argue with him themselves.

Some college students conduct their own interviews when writing a paper, but that's unusual. Most people rely on books, websites, articles from newspapers or magazines, or database searches. When citing these sources you must give specific information that helps your readers get hold of that book, website, article or whatever else you used.

What information do you have to give? In this class, we follow the citation rules of the Modern Language Association (MLA). According to the MLA, you must give the following information for a book:

Last Name, First Name. *Title*. Place: Publisher, Date. Print.

Perino, Sheila C., and Joseph Perino. *Parenting the Gifted: Developing the Promise*. New York: R.R.

Bowker, 1981. Print.

Dorson, Richard M., ed. *Patriots of the American Revolution: True Accounts by Great Americans, from Ethan Allen to George Rogers Clark*. New York: Gramercy Books, 1953. Print.

Notice that the first line of the citation is up against the left-hand side of the page, while every line after that is indented five spaces. In MLA style all your citations should be done this way. Notice also that the period after the title is not underlined; that the important words in the title are capitalized, and that when a book has more than one author, only the first author's name is in reverse order. **MLA style, like all other citation styles, is very, very picky about details. Pay attention to those periods and commas.**

Finally, don't be afraid to say "I don't know." When you're writing a paper, you're trying to give an accurate picture of a subject, including aspects of that subject that are still being studied. If your sources are unclear, or seem unreliable, then say so. Try to find the strongest evidence available, but don't make something up if your sources won't support it. In some fields—medieval history springs to mind—nobody ever really knows anything. Admitting ignorance isn't wrong if you can show that the experts are as much in the dark as you are.

## Assignment 2

For each of the following scenarios, decide whether or not the suggested use of a work violates copyright law. Write three or four sentences to explain your reasoning in each case. Some of these questions have more than one possible answer; I will accept even a “wrong” answer, provided you can justify your decision. Hint: take a look at the “Fair Use Checklist” at the end of this packet.

1. A school theater wishes to put on a production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (first published around 1600). The director makes 25 photocopies of a published script, copying the entire script each time. The performance charges admission, but all proceeds go to the school drama department.

2. A student newspaper on campus wants to reprint an article that appeared in a commercial magazine. The editor writes to the magazine, requesting permission to publish the article, but doesn’t hear back in time for publication. The newspaper goes ahead and publishes it anyway. The newspaper is part of the college’s journalism club and is distributed to the public free of charge.

3. Four math students create a dramatic class presentation on the quadratic equation, featuring interpretive dance set to the soundtrack from *The Phantom of the Opera*. The teacher likes it so much he puts a video of the presentation on YouTube, after asking permission from the students but not from Andrew Lloyd Webber, the composer of the music.

4. A great scientist discovers the formula for eternal life and publishes it in a lengthy, poetic paper filled with colorful descriptions of the wonderful things it can do for humanity. The paper is widely copied and used in political commentary, advertising and litter boxes.

## Week 2 Quiz

1. The citation style for this class was created by:
  - A. The American Psychological Association
  - B. The Modern Language Association
  - C. The National Library of Medicine
  - D. The National Transportation Safety Board
2. The *Economic Report of the President* is not copyrighted.  
TRUE  
FALSE
3. In the professional world, the penalty for plagiarism may include:
  - A. Lawsuits
  - B. Loss of employment
  - C. Public apology
  - D. All of the above
4. In this class, the penalty for plagiarism may include:
  - A. Writing "I will not plagiarize again" 1,000 times
  - B. A zero on the relevant work
  - C. The pillory
  - D. All of the above
5. Material published in the U.S. before 1923 is not copyrighted.  
TRUE  
FALSE
6. If I want to use the "fair use" exception to make a copy of an article, which of the following is a requirement I would have to meet?
  - A. I'm copying a small part of the article
  - B. I'm not selling my copies
  - C. My use of the article has no impact on the author's sales
  - D. All of the above
7. An item is in the public domain if:
  - A. It was never copyrighted
  - B. Its copyright has expired
  - C. It is a scientific fact
  - D. All of the above
8. Citation styles are extremely picky about details.  
TRUE  
FALSE
9. You can be guilty of plagiarism while being innocent of copyright violation.  
TRUE

FALSE

10. You can be guilty of copyright violation while being innocent of plagiarism.

TRUE

FALSE

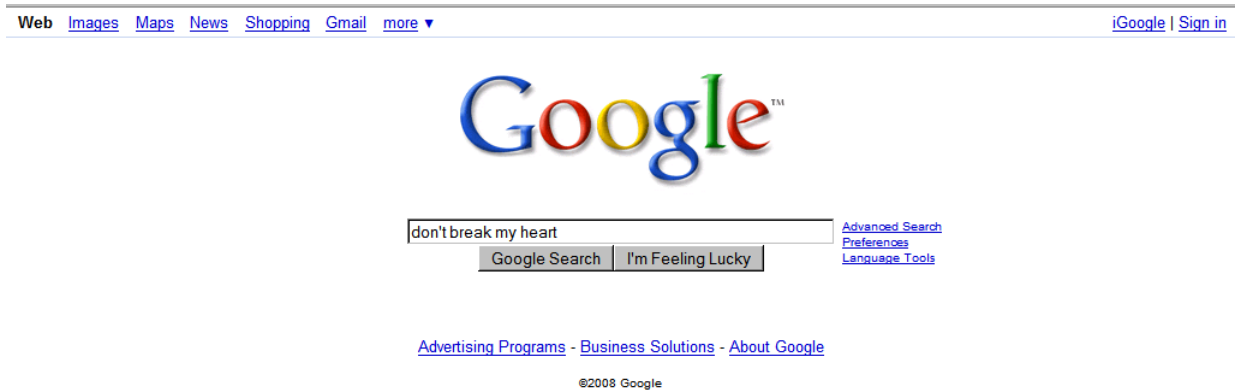
# Week 3—Websites

## Searching the Internet

This course doesn't actually require you to have internet access, which makes this week a little strange. I'm going to show you *examples* of internet searches, and I welcome you to follow along if you do have a connection. If you don't, well, use your imagination.

Think you know how to search the internet? Guess again. There are dozens of search engines out there—Alltheweb, Altavista, Ask, Clusty, Dogpile, Exalead, Findsounds, Gigablast, Google, Intelways, Live Search, Picsearch, Searchmash, Srchr, Yahoo!, and many others. These search engines make it very easy to bury yourself under a mountain of garbage, but finding good, reliable, accurate information on the internet requires skill. Websites can be valuable sources of information, and you shouldn't hesitate to use them in a college paper, but you have to be careful about the websites you choose.

(A note about terminology. "Internet" and "world wide web" are often used interchangeably, but they're not quite the same thing. The world wide web is a big part of the internet—it includes all websites whose addresses begin with "www"—but the internet also includes many small networks that are not part of the web. Password-protected or employee-only networks are part of the internet but not the web. Then there are other "websites" that just don't use a www prefix; see <http://icasualties.org> for an example.)



So how do you search the internet properly? Well, first you need to decide what you're looking for. Let's say we need the lyrics to the song "Don't Break My Heart". Go to Google ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com)) and type in

don't break my heart

Now we've got a problem. Google comes up with around 7,000,000 websites that contain those four words, and there's no way we've got time to look at them all. We need to narrow it down some more. Type in

lyrics don't break my heart

Better. Adding lyrics to the search cuts the number of websites we've found down to about 1.3 million. Now try something else:

lyrics "don't break my heart"

Better still. It's down to about 122,000. Unfortunately, there are dozens of songs by that title, and we're not sure which band did the version we want. Still, we know we don't want the song by UB40. Type in

lyrics "don't break my heart" -UB40

That cuts it down a bit more—to 102,000 hits. Now we're really stuck, since we don't have much more information to go on. Take a look to the right of the search box, right next to the Search button. You'll see the words *Advanced Search*. Click on that.

The screenshot shows the Google Advanced Search interface. At the top, the search query is entered: "lyrics \"don t break my heart\" -UB40". Below this, the interface is organized into several sections:

- Find web pages that have...**
  - all these words: lyrics
  - this exact wording or phrase: don t break my heart
  - one or more of these words: (empty fields)
- But don't show pages that have...**
  - any of these unwanted words: UB40
- Need more tools?**
  - Results per page: 10 results
  - Language: any language
  - File type: any format
  - Search within a site or domain: (empty field)
- [-] Date, usage rights, numeric range, and more**
  - Date: (how recent the page is): anytime
  - Usage rights: not filtered by license
  - Where your keywords show up: anywhere in the page
  - Region: any region
  - Numeric range: (empty fields)

At the bottom right, there is a "SafeSearch" section with radio buttons for "Off" and "On", and an "Advanced Search" button.

What are we looking at here? This screen shows you the engineering behind the search. When you type anything into the search box on the main Google screen, the words automatically go into the box at the top of this screen, which searches for websites that contain all those words. When you put quotation marks around a series of words, that tells the search engine to look for exactly those words, all together, in that order. When you put a minus sign in front of a word, that tells Google to look for

websites that do not contain that word. Look farther down the screen. You'll see *Where your keywords show up*. In the drop-down menu next to that, choose *in the title of the page*.

Now our search is down to just 1,980 results—Google is finding websites that contain our search terms in the title of the website. (That's the title of the website, not necessarily the title of the song.) We can narrow it further—limit the search to websites in English, and require those websites to contain numbers between 1990 and 1999. Now the search has been cut down to just 20 websites, one of which is probably the song we're looking for.

Google

allintitle: lyrics "don t break my heart" -UB40 1990..1999 Search Advanced Search Preferences

Search the Web Search English pages

Web Results 1 - 10 of about 20 English pages for allintitle: lyrics "don t break my heart" -UB40 1990..1999. (0.35 seconds)

[NO AUTHORITY — Please Don't Break My Heart Lyrics, MP3](#)  
Keep On 1997 Please Don't Break My Heart Lyrics. Please Don't Break My Heart ... (chorus).  
Other lyrics from Keep On 1997 album ...  
[www.utterlyrics.com/n/no-authority/keep-on-1997/please-don-t-break-my-heart.html](http://www.utterlyrics.com/n/no-authority/keep-on-1997/please-don-t-break-my-heart.html) - 8k -  
Cached - Similar pages

[Please Don't Break My Heart Lyrics - by NO AUTHORITY from album ...](#)  
Please Don't Break My Heart Song Lyrics NO AUTHORITY : KEEP ON (1997). Download NO  
AUTHORITY Ringtones to Your Phone ... More songs from KEEP ON (1997) ...  
[www.lyricsandsongs.com/song/385882.html](http://www.lyricsandsongs.com/song/385882.html) - 27k - Cached - Similar pages

[Paolo Conte - Don't Break My Heart Lyrics](#)  
Year: 1995 Title: Don't Break My Heart, Print - Correct · Get Don't Break My Heart ringtone on  
your mobile! Don't break my heart A flat so planning ...  
[www.lyricsmania.com/.../paolo\\_conte\\_live\\_lyrics\\_9778/  
dont\\_break\\_my\\_heart\\_lyrics\\_113444.html](http://www.lyricsmania.com/.../paolo_conte_live_lyrics_9778/dont_break_my_heart_lyrics_113444.html) - 30k - Cached - Similar pages

[KYM MARSH LYRICS - Don't Break My Heart](#)  
PARTNERS: | Lyricsology | LyricsPremium | LyricsClan | LyricsMedia |. Copyright 1998 - 2008  
Lerenti.com . All Rights Reserved.  
[www.lyricscafe.com/m/marsh\\_kym/014.htm](http://www.lyricscafe.com/m/marsh_kym/014.htm) - 26k - Cached - Similar pages

[UB 40 - Don't Break My Heart Lyrics](#)  
... Incubus, Rascal Flatts, Yellowcard, Timbaland, Ne-Yo, T-Pain, Blink 182, Justin  
Timberlake. Copyright © 1998-2008 LetsSingIt | disclaimer | privacy policy.  
[artists.letssingit.com/ub-40-lyrics-dont-break-my-heart-23gqcr8](http://artists.letssingit.com/ub-40-lyrics-dont-break-my-heart-23gqcr8) - 70k - Cached - Similar pages

When the search starts to get really detailed, the search restrictions sometimes collide with one another. We did tell Google not to show us any webpages with UB40 in them, but I notice that UB40 has crept into the search results again. The program isn't perfect. No search engine is.

Other search engines offer similar search options and use similar commands to make the search happen.

## Judging Websites

As I said earlier, it's very easy to find bad information on the internet, but it can be a lot harder to find sources you can trust. How do you know the website isn't lying to you? Even when they're being honest, how do you know they've done serious research or know their topic thoroughly?

There are three things to watch out for when judging a website: authority, accuracy, and currency.

**Authority** involves the *author* of a website. Do they know what they're talking about? Do they have an incentive to lie to you? On many websites, you can't even tell who the author is. Here are some clues that the author might be reliable:

- The author's name appears on the website.

- The author offers credentials or qualifications (i.e. a PhD in the subject, twenty years experience doing this kind of research, etc.)

- The website includes the author's contact information, such as an email address or telephone number. This tells you that they are willing to stand behind their words. If you want to make really certain the information is reliable, you can speak to them directly and ask for details.

- The website was recommended to you by another source (in other words, it was listed in someone's bibliography or mentioned elsewhere as a good source of information).

- The author has no particular bias (or, if they do, they admit it). In other words, the author tries to present all sides of an issue and doesn't push one point of view. In cases where some bias is unavoidable, the author is honest about it. For example: "This drug evaluation was funded by Pfizer corporation, which makes the drug in question."

- The website has a respectable top-level domain. The **top-level domain** is the three-letter code that appears at the end of a web address; it's the *.edu* in *www.taftcollege.edu*. This particular domain is reserved for websites that belong to a college or university, and information from a *.edu* website is generally more reliable than information from other websites. (Not always, though. Many student webpages are hosted on a university server. Just because a website has a *.edu* domain name doesn't necessarily mean the material on it was written by a professor.) Other domains to watch for: **.gov** (websites belonging to a state or national government, usually considered trustworthy); **.com** (short for "commercial", usually used by businesses, may or may not be trustworthy); **.org** (short for "organization", usually used by nonprofit organizations, may or may not be trustworthy); **.net** (short for "network", often personal websites or vanity pages, most of which are junk).

**Accuracy** has to do with the *content* of the website. Based on what you already know, does the information seem reliable? Are there obvious errors? Are there blank spots where essential information is missing? Clues for judging accuracy:

- The website includes a bibliography.

- The website is carefully designed—spelling and grammar have been checked, graphs are properly labeled, and the images are relevant to the text.

- The website contains information that can be corroborated. In other words, the information on the site matches information you found in other sources. When your sources contradict one another, you have to think carefully about which one you trust more.

-The text is detailed and specific, with facts you can check. Writing that seems deliberately vague is a warning sign.

-The website has been peer-reviewed. **Peer review** is a formal process that academic journals use to evaluate articles before publishing them. Every article gets examined by a panel of experts in the field of study, who read and critique the article and recommend changes. Few websites are peer-reviewed, but you can almost always trust the ones that are.

**Currency** asks how up-to-date the information is. How recently was the website updated? If it's been a long time, have things changed in that subject area? The newest information is often the best, but not absolutely always. Things to look for:

-The website has a copyright date or a date of revision.

-The website mentions recent events.

-The website offers an RSS feed or email notification (i.e. the website will contact you automatically when new information comes in; this feature is common on news websites).

There is no way to be 100% certain about the reliability of any source. Websites are less reliable than most sources, so look for these clues every time you visit a site. I've summarized the clues in a table at the end of this packet.

## How to Cite a Website (See Pages 185-186 in the *MLA Handbook*)

At times, I think the MLA must be stuck solidly in the 19th century. Their advice on citing books is quite good; their advice on citing articles from databases is questionable; and their advice for citing websites is incomprehensible. The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Handbook* is a major improvement over older editions. Here's the basic form:

Last Name, First Name. "Specific Page or Section Title." *Website Title*. Publisher, Date of Creation. Web.  
Date of Access.

Van Helden, Al. "Galileo Timeline." *The Galileo Project*. N.p., 1995. Web. 25 Sept. 2007.

In the example above, the website does not name a publisher, so I wrote "N.p." in its place. This happens a lot. You frequently can't find the date of creation, either, so you have to put "n.d." there instead.

There's a lot of confusion over the difference between a section title and the website title. The website title is the title of the main page of the site, while a section title is the title of a particular webpage that you reached off of that main page. In the example above, *The Galileo Project* is in italics because it's the main page for information about Galileo. Any links off that page ("Life of Galileo",

“Inventions of Galileo”, “Galileo’s Mother”) would be in quotation marks, since they are smaller parts of the entire website.

The *Handbook* offers a few more examples on pages 185-186. Note that all these examples are for complete websites (that is, homepages) and not for sections. Watch out for that difference.

## Assignment 3

The following page shows you a fake website that I created JUST FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT. (Don't you feel special?) Evaluate this website, using the guide to judging websites at the end of this packet. Don't bother to look for this site on the web—it exists only on my computer.

1. Cite the website, using the information provided below.

Author: *Robin F. Winchell IV*

Title: *Mariana vs. Puerto Rico: Which is Better?*

Date: *March 21, 2008*

Publisher: *unknown*

Place of publication: *unknown*

Number of pages: *1*

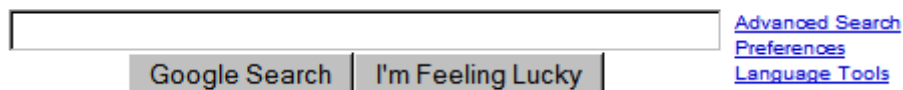
Date of access: *March 24, 2008*

URL: *http://www.ihatemariana.net*

2. What clues make you think this site might be **trustworthy**?

3. What clues make you think this site might be **untrustworthy**?

4. If you were searching the internet for information about this topic, what would you type into your search engine?

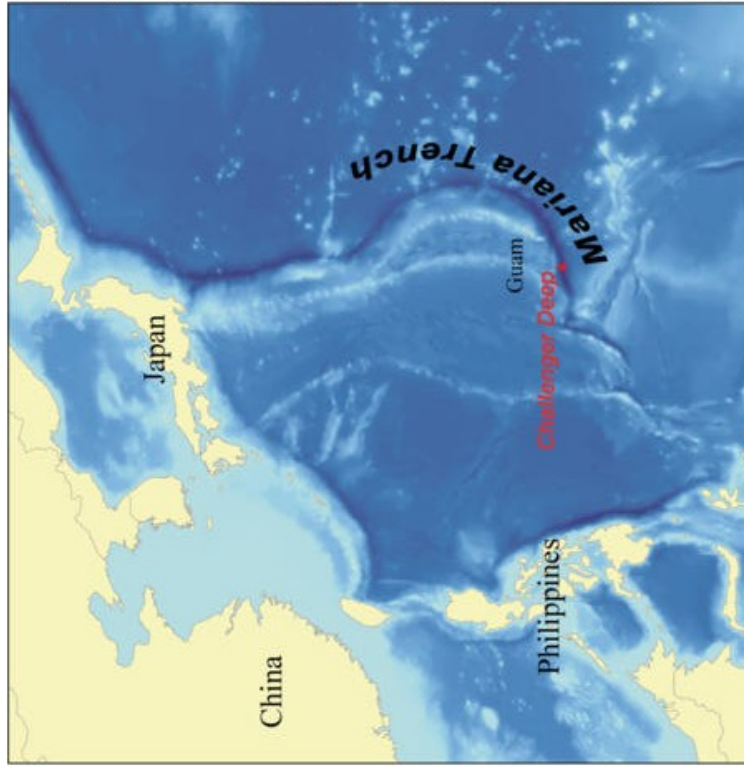


5. Approximately how deep is the Puerto Rico Trench? (You can use print sources to answer this, if you don't have internet access.)

6. Approximately how deep is the Mariana Trench? (You can use print sources to answer this, if you don't have internet access.)

## Mariana vs. Puerto Rico: Which is Better?

by Robin F. Winchell IV



The map at the right shows a picture of the Puerto Rico Trench, which is in the Caribbean Sea. The Puerto Rico Trench is the deepest point in the Earth's oceans.

Puerto Rico is close to Guam, which is marked on the map.

The Puerto Rico Trench is a lot better than the Mariana Trench, which most people think is the deepest trench in the world. The PRT not only has a better name (what does "Mariana" mean, anyway?) but it also has tastier fish and more sunshine. Don't believe those people in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration when they tell you that Mariana is deeper. Those people are PART OF THE CONSPIRACY.

PRT was shown to be deeper than Mariana when the Andorran submarine *Playa de Arena* sank near *Vieques Island* in 2006.

© 21 March 2008.

### About the Author

*Robin F. Winchell IV* lived in Puerto Rico for 27 years while conducting research that eventually led to his high-school diploma. He is a recognized expert in canine hypnosis and maintains the world's largest collection of yogurt containers. He can be reached through [this link](#).

## Week 3 Quiz

1. The most recent information is always the best.  
TRUE  
FALSE
2. The Internet and world wide web are the same thing.  
TRUE  
FALSE
3. When citing a website, if you can't find the author's name, you should:  
A. Leave it out of the citation  
B. Make up a fake name  
C. Write "Anonymous"  
D. Put in your own name
4. Websites can be used as sources in a college paper.  
TRUE  
FALSE
5. **Accuracy** involves the \_\_\_\_\_ of a website.  
A. Author  
B. Content  
C. Up-to-dateness  
D. Celebrity endorsement
6. In a Google search, what happens if you put quotation marks around a phrase?  
A. The computer searches for websites containing **all** the words inside quotations  
B. The computer searches for websites containing **none** of the words inside quotations  
C. The computer searches for websites containing the **exact phrase** inside quotations  
D. The computer crashes
7. In a Google search, what happens if you put a minus sign (-) in front of a word?  
A. The computer searches for websites containing that word  
B. The computer searches for websites that do not contain that word  
C. The computer suggests you made a spelling error  
D. The computer steals your credit card number and books a flight to Tahiti
8. How many search engines are there?  
A. One  
B. Five  
C. Dozens

D. Millions

9. You can trust a website that was written by a biased author.

- A. Always
- B. Sometimes
- C. Never
- D. There's no such thing as a biased author

10. In a website citation, the URL:

- A. Is blue and underlined
- B. Is blue but not underlined
- C. Is underlined but not blue
- D. Is neither blue nor underlined

## Week 4—Periodicals

### Periodicals and Peer Review

"Periodical" is a librarian's word. We use it because it makes us sound smart.

A periodical is anything that is published on an ongoing basis. It includes newspapers (published daily or weekly) as well as magazines and journals (published bimonthly, monthly or quarterly). Anything that comes out less than twice a year is not usually considered a periodical.

College students tend to overlook periodicals when doing research, which is unfortunate, because they offer a lot of useful information. Historians and political analysts use newspapers; sociologists, anthropologists, linguists and students of popular culture read magazines, and students in all fields can find helpful articles in academic journals.

Most libraries offer a variety of periodicals. Taft College Library keeps current newspapers for 1 month and magazines for about 3 years. Kern County Library keeps them much longer; they hold every issue of the *Bakersfield Californian* or its predecessors going back to the 1860s. Some publications are digitizing their old issues and making them available through a website or database.

Periodicals fall into two broad categories: those that are peer-reviewed and those that aren't. I mentioned peer review in last week's lesson, but to go over it again: peer review is a way for academic journals to guarantee the accuracy of an article before they publish it. When you submit an article for publication, the journal will send it to five or six reviewers, who are experts in the topic you're writing about. These reviewers will check the article for factual errors or bad math and then send it back to the journal, which publishes it.

How can you tell if a journal is peer-reviewed? Most journals print the "rules for submissions" at the beginning or end of the journal. These rules specify what you have to do to get an article published, and they will tell you if the article will be reviewed. Peer-reviewed journals nearly always require their authors to include a bibliography. Formal journals like *Science*, *Nature*, *The Journal of the American Medical Association* and *The Journal of Cultural Geography* are all peer-reviewed. Informal journals and magazines like *Scientific American*, *National Geographic*, *Newsweek* and *People* are not. I've never heard of a peer-reviewed newspaper, though I suppose it's possible.

Formal journals often include an abstract at the beginning of each article. An abstract is a short summary of the article, covering all the major points that the author makes.

### Newsires

Ever wondered how newspapers get their news so fast? Take the 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean, for example. Within minutes American newspapers were full of reports from tiny villages in remote locations all over the East Indies—places that no one in North America has ever heard of. Did

the *Los Angeles Times* really have a reporter sitting around in Banda Aceh, waiting for something to happen?

No. Newspapers don't do that. But newswires do.

A **newswire** is an association of reporters and news outlets that all share the same information. Reporters working for a tiny local paper can sell their stories to the newswire, which then resells the stories to thousands of news outlets around the world. That's why you can sometimes pick up two different newspapers and see the same story in each; both newspapers bought the story from the same newswire. In this particular case, all the news outlets in North America got their first tsunami reports from newswire members in Indonesia and Malaysia.

There are three major newswires in business today: Reuters (which specializes in financial reporting), the Associated Press (AP), and Agence France-Presse (AFP). A variety of smaller newswires cover regional news in different parts of the world.

Newswires are excellent sources for short, up-to-the-second reports. They are also good sources for historical research, since their reports are often the first records of an event. Reuters provided the first news that Mt. Everest had been climbed (1953) and that the border between East and West Berlin was closed (1961). AFP was the first to report the death of Joseph Stalin (1953) and the murder of Israeli hostages at the Munich Olympics (1972). The AP scored the first coverage of the San Francisco earthquake (1906) and the verdicts in the Nuremberg trials (1946). An AP reporter copied Lincoln's notes for the Gettysburg Address (1863) and another took the famous photograph of marines raising the flag on Iwo Jima (1945).

## How to Cite an Article From a Print Source (See Pages 136-143 in the *MLA Handbook*)

### Form #1:

Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Periodical Title* Volume Number.Issue Number (Year): Page Numbers. Print.

Radjaeipour, Gitta. "Improving Decision-making in Restorations: Evaluation of Impressions and Working Casts." *Journal of the California Dental Association* 35.9 (2007): 637-640. Print.

In the example above, the volume number is 35 and the issue number is 9. The article is found in pages 637-640 in the journal. Notice that there is no period after the title of the periodical.

Some magazines and newspapers don't use volume or issue numbers; in this case you can just give the date of the issue. Page numbers can also be written a little differently:

### Form #2:

Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Periodical Title* Date of Issue: 1st page of article (number of pages in article). Print.

Goldman, Stuart J. "Aliens in Our Midst?" *Sky & Telescope* Nov. 2007: 40 (1). Print.

In this example, the article begins on page 40 of the magazine, and the article is only 1 page long. **A warning about dates: if I was using Form #1, I would include the year of publication but not the month or day. In Form #2, I would include the year, month and exact date, if available.** The date would be written European style: 16 Aug. 1998.

See pages 136-143 in the *MLA Handbook* for more examples.

## Assignment 4

**Pick any major event in the news—a speech, a bombing, an accident, a Congressional debate, etc.—and find 3 articles about that event from 3 different PRINT periodicals. (No online sources, please!) The articles can come from newspapers, magazines or journals. Be sure that they are NEWS articles, not opinion columns or editorials. You can use old news, if you like.**

**Be careful! If you find two articles that say EXACTLY THE SAME THING, in the same words, that means that both publications bought the article from the same reporter and news service. In this case, find a different article for your collection.**

1. Cite your three articles in correct MLA style (see pages 136-143 in the *MLA Handbook*). You can use these citations on the Final Project!

2. Compare your articles. Do all three cover the story the same way? Do they quote different sources, offer different statistics, or come to different conclusions? Is there information in one article that is not found in the other two? Which article do you like best?

3. Do any of the publications seem to have a political or cultural slant? Are they trying to persuade you to take one particular point of view?

4. Summarize the story yourself. What happened?

## Week 4 Quiz

1. How can you tell if a journal is peer-reviewed?
  - A. If the periodical is really boring, it must be peer-reviewed
  - B. Look for the reviewer's name after the author's
  - C. Check the rules for submissions
  - D. Any periodical with the word "Journal" in its title must be peer-reviewed
2. When citing an article from a print source, always put a period after the periodical title.  
TRUE  
FALSE
3. Which of the following is NOT a periodical?
  - A. A journal
  - B. A novel
  - C. A magazine
  - D. A newspaper
4. Which news agency was the first to report the great San Francisco earthquake?
  - A. Agence France-Presse
  - B. Xinhua
  - C. Reuters
  - D. the Associated Press
5. Taft College Library keeps magazines for:
  - A. 3 months
  - B. 3 years
  - C. 3 decades
  - D. forever
6. A summary of an article is called:
  - A. A citation
  - B. Full text
  - C. An abstract
  - D. A bibliography
7. If you find the same story in two different newspapers, it means:
  - A. One newspaper is plagiarizing the other
  - B. The same reporter works for both papers
  - C. It's a coincidence
  - D. Both newspapers bought the story from the same newswire

8. Who uses periodicals?

- A. Cultural commentators
- B. Historians
- C. Scientists
- D. All of the above

9. *National Geographic* is a peer-reviewed journal.

- TRUE
- FALSE

10. In the citation below, *44 (6)* means:

**Conniff, Richard. "That Great Beast of a Town." Natural History Mar. 2008: 44 (6).**

- A. The article came from volume 44, issue 6 of the periodical
- B. The article was published in the year 44, give or take 6 years
- C. The article begins on page 44 and it's 6 pages long
- D. Multiply 44 by 6 to uncover the secret code

# Week 5—Databases

## Databases in General

What is a database? According to *Random House-Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*:

A comprehensive collection of related data organized for convenient access, generally in a computer.

Although the word usually applies to information that's stored in a computer, any collection of information can be a database, as long as you can find what you need when you need it. A library, a filing cabinet, even a family photo album can be a database. A loose heap of papers, consisting of stuff that "maybe I'll look at later," does not meet the definition.

The internet is usually not considered a database, although you can argue about that. The internet certainly contains a lot of information, and search engines make it at least partially retrievable. Personally, I would compare it to that loose heap of papers in the last paragraph—it's just too disorganized to really qualify.

Many databases are created commercially. A company such as EBSCO, Proquest or Thomson-Gale collects articles or statistics from various sources, organizes the data with a search screen, and then charges you a subscription fee to look at it. Taft College currently subscribes to 37 commercial databases, all of which are available in the library and through the "Databases" link on the library website (<http://web.taftcollege.edu/library/library.shtml>). Access to the databases is free for students, and you can go directly into any of them from any computer on campus. If you're trying to get into them from home, you will need the username (taftcollege) and the password (tcstudent). Kern County Library also offers access to a number of databases, if you have a library card.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>General:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Books in Print With Reviews</li> <li>• Britannica Enciclopedia Universal (Spanish)</li> <li>• Britannica Online</li> <li>• Merriam Webster's 3rd New International Dictionary</li> <li>• Oxford English Dictionary</li> </ul> <p><b>Periodicals/Articles:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded Academic ASAP (InfoTrac)</li> <li>• Informe (InfoTrac Spanish)</li> <li>• NewsBank NewsFile</li> <li>• NewsBank Noticias (Spanish)</li> <li>• ProQuest Newspapers</li> </ul> <p><b>Art:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grove Art Online</li> </ul> <p><b>Criminal Justice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal Justice Periodical Index (English, Spanish, other languages)</li> </ul> <p><b>Literature:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literary Databases (Contemporary Authors, Contemporary Literary Criticism Select, Dictionary of Literary Biography)</li> </ul> <p><b>Sciences:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encyclopedia of Life Sciences</li> <li>• McGraw-Hill Access Science</li> </ul> | <p><b>Social Sciences/Current Events:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AccuNet/AP Multimedia Archive</li> <li>• American National Biography</li> <li>• Annals of American History</li> <li>• CountryWatch</li> <li>• CQ (Congressional Quarterly)</li> <li>• Ethnic NewsWatch (English, Spanish)</li> <li>• Facts.com: Facts on File World News Digest</li> <li>• Lexis-Nexis Academic</li> <li>• Opposing Viewpoints</li> <li>• RAND California</li> </ul> <p><b>Professional:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chronicle of Higher Education</li> <li>• Educator's Reference Desk</li> <li>• ERIC Database</li> <li>• Gateway to Educational Materials (GEM)</li> <li>• TURNITIN</li> </ul> <p><b>eBooks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• netLibrary</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

So, what kind of information can you find in a database? Well, look at some of the ones we have:

**Britannica Online** is the computerized form of the famous *Encyclopedia Britannica*, complete with pictures.

**Grove Art Online** contains articles about artworks, artists and the history of art.

**Criminal Justice Periodical Index** gathers law-enforcement-related articles from newspapers and magazines. It emphasizes practical aspects of law enforcement (pay scales for police, equipment ratings, etc.) rather than the details of the law.

**JSTOR** gathers articles from academic journals going back to the middle 1800s. It's an excellent source for peer-reviewed and technical information.

**Opposing Viewpoints** handles controversial (sometimes explosive) social issues. The database presents essays from several different viewpoints, arguing—for example—that abortion should or should not be legal, and that torturing terrorists is or is not justifiable.

If you have internet access, you might spend some time playing around in the databases, just to see what else is available.

## Newsbank

**Newsbank** collects articles exclusively from newspapers and newswires. (Remember newswires? Go back and look at last week's lesson if you don't.) All the articles are available in full text—that is, you can read the entire thing. Unfortunately, they leave out any photos or images.

For some reason—probably having to do with money—the company split the database in half. **Newsbank Retrospective** includes articles from 1970 to 1991. **Newsbank Newsfile** contains articles from 1992 to the present. Taft College subscribes to both, but doing searches over a broad time span involves a lot of tedious switching back and forth.

You can find a lot of tiny newspapers from small towns, as well as internationally known publications. The *Bakersfield Californian* is in there, as is *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. (As of this moment, *USA Today* is not.)

When you first enter the database, it shows you the *Basic Search* screen, which allows you to search through articles by subject. If you click on more search options, right beside the big *Search* button, you'll see the *Advanced Search* screen. In *Advanced Search* you can limit yourself to articles from a given time period, as well as searching for words that appear in the headline, first paragraph or body of the article. You can also restrict the search to articles from particular newspaper. **Warning: in *Advanced Search*, the articles always appear in reverse chronological order, not in relevance order. In the *Basic Search* you can change the display to relevance; click on the drop-down menu beside *Return* and set it to *Best matches first*.** I find this infuriating beyond all bounds of reason, but that's the way it is.



Remember the giant fire in a Rhode Island nightclub back in 2003? (There was an episode of *CSI* about it, for those of you who get your education from TV.) Try going first to the *Basic Search* screen. Type:

fire, Rhode Island, nightclub

in the box next to the *Search* button. Set the *Return* to *Best matches first* from *all documents*. (By default, the setting in this box is past twelve months, but we want articles from farther back than that.) Then click the *Search* button.

The screenshot shows the NewsBank NewsFile Collection interface. At the top, there's a search bar with the text 'fire, Rhode Island, nightclub'. Below it are options for 'Return' (Best matches first) and 'Reading Level' (all). A 'Search' button is visible. To the right, there are 'Search Hints' and a list of 'Subjects' related to the search, including FIRES, FOREST AND BRUSH FIRES, NIGHTCLUBS, FIRE PREVENTION, ARSON, ACCIDENTS, FIREFIGHTING, BARS AND PUBS, FIRE TRUCKS, ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRIES, FIREFIGHTERS, SMOKE DETECTORS, FIRE CHIEFS, BARRIER ISLANDS, FIRE ANTS, ISLANDS, and FRIENDLY FIRE PREVENTION.

The article at the top of my list is "Rhode Island Nightclub Inferno Kills 39." Clicking on the title shows me the actual article. The story gives me a number of other factors I can use to make my search more detailed—it mentions the date of the fire, town where it occurred, and the fact that the band Great White was performing. When I type these facts on the *Advanced Search* screen I come up with a number of other articles about the event.

Newsbank is a good source for research in history, political science and international affairs. For research on other topics, look at the next database below.

## Expanded Academic ASAP

**Expanded Academic ASAP** is similar to Newsbank, but it includes magazine and journal articles as well as clips from newspapers and newswires. It's useful for all topics, from history to physics.

Some important things to know: this database includes not only full text articles, but also abstracts and even just citations. **Full text** means that the complete article is available for reading, possibly including pictures. If you want to do a search for articles you can actually read, you must specify that the search is for *full text* only.

Let's say I'm looking for articles about jet engines. I typed *jet engines* into the search box and put a check mark in the box beside *limit to documents with full text*. If I chose, I could also limit the search to peer-reviewed materials or to articles that include pictures. There are several other possible limitations. You can search by date of publication or by publication title, for instance.

Here are the articles that this search turned up:

Expanded Academic ASAP

Preferences | Change Databases | Logout

Bookmark Previous Searches Dictionary Title List Help

Basic Search Subject Guide Search Publication Search Advanced Search

Powered by InfoTrac

Subject Guide Search Subject Guide Results

**Search**

within these results

Results for SubjectGuide Search (su ("Jet Engines"))LIMITS:( full text)

Academic Journals (27) Magazines (32) Books (0) News (14) Multimedia (0)

limit to:  full-text  peer-reviewed  with images

Sort by: Publication Date

Mark All

Previous 1 2 Next

- Mark **1. Jet thermometer.(technology focus: INSTRUMENTATION AND CONTROL)(Brief article).** Jeffrey Winters. Brief article

*Mechanical Engineering-CIME* 130.2 (Feb 2008): p18(1). (387 words)

[Full-text](#) |
- Mark **2. Beating the heat: ceramics show promise in R&D for new jet turbines, where heat is the main cause of failure.(MATERIALS SCIENCE/NANOTECHNOLOGY).** Paul Livingston. Article

*R & D* 50.1 (Feb 2008): p32(2). (1446 words)

[Full-text](#) |

Notice the row of tabs at the top of the list. All the articles we're looking at here come from academic journals. If I wanted to see articles from magazines or newspapers, I could click on those tabs. Notice something else—many of the titles on this list include a note inside parentheses, like (PROCESS TECHNOLOGY). These notes aren't actually part of the title. The database managers stuck them in, thinking they would be helpful, but you should leave them out of your citation for the article.

You can read the actual articles by clicking on the titles. At the very end of each article, at the bottom of the screen, the computer automatically generates an MLA citation for the article. Treat these citations with caution—they're usually close to perfect, but the computer sometimes doesn't know what it's doing. It always includes those parenthesized notes in the title, and it puts in the complete URL with all its meaningless gibberish. You'll lose points on assignments if you include those things.

## How to Cite an Article From a Database

(See Pages 192-193 in the *MLA Handbook*)

At first glance, database citations look terrifyingly complicated. Be of good cheer! You already know how to do about half of it; the first part of the citation is exactly the same as citing an article from a print source. You just have to tack on a bunch of extra information about the database you got the article from.

### Form #1:

Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Periodical Title* Volume Number.Issue Number (Year): Page

Numbers. *Database Name*. Web. Date of Access.

Radjaeipour, Gitta. "Improving Decision-making in Restorations: Evaluation of Impressions and Working Casts." *Journal of the California Dental Association* 35.9 (2007): 637-640. *Proquest*. Web. 2 Oct. 2007.

Some databases have a habit of leaving out page numbers on the grounds that the pages don't matter in an electronic source. When this happens, you have no choice but to put "n. pag." after the colon. In the example above, *Proquest* is the name of the database and *2 Oct. 2007* is the date that I looked at it.

As I pointed out before, a database is not the same thing as the internet. Nevertheless, the MLA uses the word "Web" to describe any electronic source. That's just the way it is.

#### **Form #2:**

This is the same as Form #1, except that this magazine doesn't use volume and issue numbers, and I've written the page numbers in a different way. It's the difference between Forms 1 and 2 for citing articles from print sources, as explained last week.

Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." *Periodical Title* Date of Issue: 1st page of article (number of pages in article). *Database Name*. Web. Date of Access.


Goldman, Stuart J. "Aliens in Our Midst?" *Sky & Telescope* Nov. 2007: 40 (1). *Expanded Academic ASAP*. Web. 2 Oct. 2007.

For details and more examples, see pages 192-193 in the *MLA Handbook*.

## Assignment 5

A database can contain any type of information. The databases I mentioned before contain articles, but databases can also be designed to hold social security numbers, criminal records, photographs, passenger ticket information, and many other types of data. The fake database below contains information about old sailing ships, organized in a variety of ways:

*A Database of Sailing Vessels*



**Keyword:**

**Vessel Name:**

**Captain Name:**

**Company Name:**

**Size (standard tons):**

**ADDITIONAL LIMITS**

**Years of Operation:**  to

**Country of Registry:**

**Vessel Type:**

- Military
- Cargo
- Passenger
- Other

Design your own database, on paper. (You don't actually have to program anything into a computer.) It can be about anything you like—animals, music, a favorite sport, your family, your finances, etc.—and decide what kind of information you would put in it. Answer each of the questions below **BEFORE** you start drawing your search screen.

1. What topic is your database about?
  
  
  
  
  
2. What is the target audience for the database? (Academic researchers? Middle-school students? Private friends?)
  
  
  
  
  
3. Is any of the information in your database under copyright? In other words, do you need to get permission before putting this information into the database?

4. Does this information need to be protected by passwords or other security measures?

5. Design the search screen for your database. You can use the form below or create your own search screen from scratch. What kind of searches would you do, and what kind of searches might other people do? A good database can present information in several different ways—by date, by quantity, by name, and so on. Think back to the class on searching for websites—did you learn any search techniques there that you can build into your database?

*A Homegrown Database*

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
|                          |    |
|                          |    |
|                          |    |
|                          |    |
|                          |    |
| <b>ADDITIONAL LIMITS</b> |    |
|                          | to |
|                          | to |
|                          |    |
|                          |    |
|                          |    |
|                          |    |

Submit

## Week 5 Quiz

1. Where can you find Taft College Library's databases?
  - A. Under the librarian's desk
  - B. On the library's website
  - C. Only in the library itself
  - D. Nowhere—Taft College Library has no databases
  
2. Newsbank contains:
  - A. Articles from newspapers and newswires
  - B. Articles from magazines and journals
  - C. Articles from banks
  - D. All of the above
  
3. Expanded Academic ASAP contains:
  - A. Articles from newspapers and newswires
  - B. Articles from magazines and journals
  - C. Abstracts
  - D. All of the above
  
4. Is the internet a database?
  - A. Yes
  - B. No
  - C. Open to debate, but most people say yes
  - D. Open to debate, but most people say no
  
5. In the *Advanced Search* in Newsbank, articles are always listed in:
  - A. Reverse chronological order
  - B. Relevance order
  - C. Random order
  - D. Alphabetical order
  
6. When citing an article from a database, always include the notes inside parentheses as part of the title.  

TRUE  
FALSE
  
7. Full text means:
  - A. The complete article is available for reading
  - B. The article is full of mistakes
  - C. The article fills the entire page
  - D. None of the above

8. Opposing Viewpoints would be a good database to look at if you were doing research on:
- A. Honeybee diseases
  - B. The physics behind *Star Trek*
  - C. Gun control
  - D. Medieval poetry
9. Criminal Justice Periodicals Index would be a good database to look at if you were doing research on:
- A. Female guards in male prisons
  - B. The geology of Romania
  - C. The *Snyder v. Louisiana* murder trial
  - D. Negotiations for funding the International Space Station
10. Encyclopedia of Life Sciences would be a good database to look at if you were doing research on:
- A. The life of Rembrandt, the painter
  - B. The life of the European Green Crab
  - C. The life of the average Russian citizen
  - D. Life, the universe, and everything

# Week 6—Using Your Library

## Catalogs

What's the first thing you look for after entering a library? (Besides the restroom.) If you're doing research, you might start by going to the databases or the internet, or you might head for the bookshelves. But how do you find the right books on those shelves?

Look in the catalog. A **catalog** is an organized list of all the materials in the library. It will include all the books, CDs, videos, records, microfilm reels, maps, works of art and everything else in the library's possession. Most catalogs list the materials in at least four different ways: by title, author, subject and ISBN number.

Most libraries keep their catalogs online, so they're accessible through a website or any computer inside the building. Searching the catalog is a lot like using a search engine to hunt through websites. (In some ways, it's exactly the same. Google, or any other search engine, actually IS a catalog. Google has created a list of websites organized by subject. When you type your search into the Google search engine, it checks the list and shows you all the websites included under the subject you typed in. Google does NOT actually search the entire internet every time you type in a search—that would take weeks.) Not only will the catalog help you find what you're looking for, it will also tell you if those books are checked out, provide links to the publisher or author's website, and maybe show you the cover of the book or suggest related materials.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the National Library of Australia Catalogue. The header includes the text "NATIONAL LIBRARY of AUSTRALIA CATALOGUE" and "NATIONAL LIBRARY HOME". Below the header is a horizontal menu with buttons for "NEW SEARCH", "RESULTS", "HISTORY", "REQUEST ITEM", "MY REQUESTS", "MY FOLDER", "COPIES DIRECT", and "HELP".

The search interface features four search options: "SEARCH", "ADVANCED SEARCH", "GEOSPATIAL SEARCH", and "WHAT'S NEW". Each option has a corresponding "Find:" input field. The "SEARCH" field is selected and shows "all of these" and "in: Keywords". The other three fields show "any of these" and "in: Author", "in: Title", and "in: Subject" respectively. Each "Find:" field includes radio buttons for "AND", "OR", and "NOT".

At the bottom of the search interface, there is a "25 records per page" dropdown, "SEARCH" and "RESET" buttons, and a "SET MORE LIMITS" button.

Below the search interface is another horizontal menu with buttons for "NEW SEARCH", "RESULTS", "HISTORY", "REQUEST ITEM", "MY REQUESTS", "MY FOLDER", "COPIES DIRECT", and "HELP".

[Finding Journal Articles](#) | [Ask a Librarian](#) | [Technical Assistance](#)

Here's the catalog for the National Library of Australia. (They spell it "catalogue"—those crazy Australians.) The catalog offers you a search box where you type in what you're searching for. Beside

that is another box where you tell the computer what kind of search you're doing. Most researchers choose to search by subject—looking for books or articles on a particular topic. If you're looking for a specific book, you can search the catalog by author or title. If you need a really specific book, you can hunt by ISBN number.

**ISBN** stands for "International Standard Book Number", and it's sort of like a serial number for the book. Every time a publisher brings out a new book, they put a new ISBN on it. Different editions of the same book will have different ISBNs, as will hardcover and paperback versions of the book. Every significant change in the book requires that the book be given a new ISBN. That means that you can search for EXACTLY the version you need—if you're looking for the sixth edition of the *MLA Handbook* with the shiny silver cover, you can type in the ISBN for that book and the computer will not show you the fifth edition, seventh edition or the sixth-edition-with-boring-cover.

Somebody once asked me why you can't just write down ISBNs in your bibliography and leave out all this stuff about authors, titles, publishers, etc. Given that the ISBN is very specific, anybody who reads your bibliography should be able to search for the ISBN in a catalog and find exactly the source you used. There are two reasons you can't get away with this. First, the ISBN system was invented in 1966, so anything older than that has no ISBN. Secondly, ISBNs only apply to books. Articles, websites, dissertations, interviews and many other sources have no ISBN. (There is a system for magazines, called the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN), but it only identifies the magazine, not a particular issue or article.)

Many catalogs will also let you do other searches. The National Library of Australia lets you search through their materials by keyword (if you can only remember part of the title or the author's first name, this search function might help) and they also let you search the list of maps according to the place shown on the map. Other libraries let you search by date of publication, publisher's name or even the color of the cover.

Finally, if you get truly stuck, you can always ask a librarian for help. Some catalogs (such as Taft College Library's, unfortunately) have more complicated issues that make them tricky to use. We are always happy to answer questions.

## The Dewey Decimal System

Let's say you've found a book in the catalog. You know the library owns that book, because it shows up on the computer screen. But where is the book located in the library?

Up until 1876, there was no good answer to that question. Some libraries organized their books by author, some by title, and some just in order of purchase (every time they bought a new book, they stuck it on the end of the shelf. Only someone who worked there could find anything.). In that year a very strange man named Melvil Dewey—or, as he preferred to call himself, Melvil Dui—invented the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) system.

DDC organizes nonfiction books by subject. (It does not include fiction.) The system identifies all possible subjects by three-digit numbers ranging from 000 to 999. These numbers are broken down into sets of 100 (for broad topics), then each hundred is broken down into tens (more specific subjects), then each ten is broken down into ones (more specific still). Really specific subjects require decimals after the main number. So, if you were looking for a book about housecats, your search might go like this:

600 Technology and practical skills

630 Agriculture and related technologies

636 Animal care

636.8 Care of cats (Introduction to DDC, 5)

Public libraries like DDC because it's fairly simple. On the downside, it's a bit out of date: there were no computer books when the system was designed, for example. Now those books are usually shelved in 001-006, where they don't really belong, but no one knows where else to put them. The system also reflects the biases of the late 19th century. Books about religion are shelved in the 200s, but Christianity takes up all the space from 220-289, while every other religion on Earth is crammed into 290-299. Also, DDC can only sort nonfiction books—fiction has to be shelved separately.

## The Library of Congress System

Colleges and universities (including Taft College) usually prefer to use the Library of Congress (LC) system. Like DDC, LC organizes materials by subject. However, LC includes both fiction and nonfiction, and it can describe the subjects in great detail without having to create horribly long numbers. Unfortunately, it's significantly more complicated than DDC.

LC uses letters to identify its broad categories. For example: all books on political science are shelved in the J section, books on law are in K, books on education are in L, and so on. Each broad category also has subcategories, which are identified with additional letters: section Q is science in general; QA is mathematics; QB is astronomy, etc.. The numbers that come after that are more complicated, but they serve the same purpose as numbers in DDC—they break the broader topics down into specific subjects.

Okay, so both DDC and LC create a number (or letter-and-number code, in the case of LC) to tell you what the subject of a book is. How do these subject codes (they're called **call numbers**, incidentally) help you find things in a library? For DDC, it's simple. The books are placed on the shelves in straightforward numeric order, like this:

334

338.5

339

339.01

339.0299

LC first sorts the books letter-by-letter, then by the numbers that comes after them, then by any letters and numbers after that, then by year of publication. The rule is that "nothing comes before something", so K comes before KF, and KF comes before KFC. Note, however, that HZ comes before K, because (letter-by-letter) H comes before K. These call numbers are in order:

HF 9000

HZ 202

K 60

K 100.2

K 412.4

K 412.4 R 22

K 412.4 X 190 2002

KA 200.5

KA 205

KA 299 G 56

KA 1300

KD 101 F 75 1987

KM 22 1990

LA 2210

Nowadays LC includes the year as part of the call number. You'll see three of the call numbers above include a year: 1987, 1990 and 2002. They didn't always do that, however.

What should you do if you have two books with exactly the same call number? Go first by the call number, then the author's name, then the title, then the year of publication. So if you have several books with the same call number, put them in order by author:

443.7 Butler

443.7 Lewis

443.7 Thomas

If you have books with the same call number and the same author, put them in order by title:

973.1 Anderson *America the Beautiful*

973.1 Anderson *Our Great Nation*

Finally, if you have books with the same call number, author and title, you're probably looking at original and revised editions of the same book. Organize them by year of publication:

205.6 Robinson *Encyclopedia of Religion* 1995

205.6 Robinson *Encyclopedia of Religion* 2001

**When you have an LC call number that includes a year, treat the year as part of the call number. In other words, it takes precedence over the author and title.**

Confused? This might help: *Within Range* (<http://www.library.cmu.edu/Libraries/etc/index.html>) is a game developed by Carnegie Mellon University that tests your ability to put books on a shelf in order. (Click on the arcade machine to play.) It takes a little getting used to, but once you get the hang of it, you can practice all you want before you have to do it for real, on this week's assignment.

Best of luck! If you have questions, don't hesitate to ask.

## Assignment 6

1. Go to a library. Find 5 books on a topic of your choice and give me their complete bibliographic citations in proper MLA style. Note that these are BIBLIOGRAPHIC citations, not footnotes. THE CITATIONS MUST BE TYPED! Save the citations for your Final Project.

2. Look at the call numbers for your five books. Fill in the chart below, putting your books in CALL NUMBER ORDER. You can tack this onto the end of your typed citations, if you prefer. I have filled in one line as an example. (In this particular case, "2001" is both part of the call number and the year of publication, but not all libraries include the year in the call number. Organize the books first by the call number. If two books have the same call number, go by the author. If they have the same call number and the same author, go by the title, and if absolutely everything else is the same, go by year.)

| CALL NUMBER     | AUTHOR              | TITLE               | YEAR OF PUBLICATION |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| AG 105.K57 2001 | Kipfer, Barbara Ann | The Order of Things | 2001                |
|                 |                     |                     |                     |
|                 |                     |                     |                     |
|                 |                     |                     |                     |
|                 |                     |                     |                     |
|                 |                     |                     |                     |

## Week 6 Quiz

1. What is a call number?
  - A. The library's main phone line
  - B. A series of numbers and/or letters that identify the subject of a book
  - C. The number on the piece of paper you have to take while waiting in line at a butcher shop
  - D. None of the above
2. The Google search engine is a catalog.  
TRUE  
FALSE
3. DDC stands for:
  - A. Detroit Dowsing Commission
  - B. Department of Dental Cooperation
  - C. Dewey Decimal Classification
  - D. Deoxydextrose Chlorofluorocarbon
4. ISBN stands for:
  - A. International Society for Bibliographic Notation
  - B. Intelligent Systems for Ballistic Numismatics
  - C. International Standard Book Number
  - D. Integrated Serpentine Blast Nozzle
5. In the Library of Congress system, PQ comes before S.  
TRUE  
FALSE
6. If you have two books with the same call number, how should you organize them?
  - A. By author
  - B. By title
  - C. By year of publication
  - D. By color
7. What is the organizing principle behind both LC and DDC?
  - A. Subject
  - B. Author
  - C. Title
  - D. Date
8. Why can't you just write ISBNs in your bibliography?
  - A. Only books have ISBNs

- B. Old books have no ISBN
- C. Both A and B
- D. Neither A nor B

9. A library catalog will tell you whether a certain item is checked out or not.

TRUE

FALSE

10. Which of these is a problem with DDC?

- A. The system makes no sense
- B. The system is biased against non-European cultures
- C. The system can't handle nonfiction
- D. The system's designer couldn't spell his own name

## Week 7—Editing

### What Do You Mean, Edit?

Ever heard the expression, "don't judge a book by its cover"? The truth is, everybody judges books by their covers. Psychological experiments show that the way something is presented has an enormous impact on the way it's received. (You can do the experiments yourself. Walk up to some random person and hold out a pencil. Odds are good that the person will take the pencil, even if they have no use for it. People will accept the pencil even when their hands are full; you can sometimes give the same pencil to someone several times over before they reject it. On the other hand, people hesitate to take the pencil if you just leave it on the desk in front of them and walk away. The basic decision—to take the pencil or not—is the same in either case, but the way you present the decision is different.)

This plays a major role in research writing. Readers find it much easier to believe sentences that are clear and beautifully written. Lawyers use this fact all the time—the closing statement in a court case should be elegant, poetic and profoundly moving, even if it has nothing to do with the actual evidence. Knowing how to write this way helps you convince people, and it protects you against being swayed by other people with excellent salesmanship but lousy logic.

So, how do you recognize "good" writing? Good writing makes its point clearly and simply, with no wasted words. Every paragraph supports the thesis statement. Every piece of evidence is relevant to the main topic and is presented at the right time, so that it fits into the overall flow of the paper. It also *sounds* good; one way to judge the quality of the text is to read it aloud and listen to the words. If it sounds natural, excellent. If it sounds clunky and artificial, with lots of awkward pauses, it needs to be rewritten.

Don't feel bad if you make a mess of a paper on the first draft. So long as you have time to edit (and know how to edit properly) you can turn shaky prose into a masterpiece.

### Weak Verbs

Writing well means using as few words as possible to convey an idea.

On November 19, 1863, a crowd of 15,000 gathered at the town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, to commemorate the battle that had been fought there a few months earlier. The featured speaker was Edward Everett, who rambled on for much of the afternoon. When he was done Abraham Lincoln stood up and delivered a three-paragraph speech. The next day Everett wrote a letter to the president, saying, "I should be glad, if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion, in two hours, as you did in two minutes." (Torricelli 122). For his part, Lincoln remarked, "He can compress the most words into the smallest idea of any man I know." (Quotedb.com).

One of the best ways to improve your writing is to cut out unnecessary words—especially unnecessary verbs. Consider the two sentences below:

**She was going.**

**She went.**

They both mean the same thing, right? Both sentences use the same main verb—to go—but the first one sneaks in an extra verb, to be. ("Was" is the past tense form of to be.) That extra verb clutters up the sentence and slows down your writing.

Extra verbs are called **weak verbs** (or, sometimes, **auxiliary verbs**). Eliminate weak verbs whenever you can, unless they profoundly change the meaning of the sentence. Certain verbs are considered weak no matter where they appear: *to be, to do, to have, might, may, shall, can, could, should, would*. These verbs are weak even as the only verb in the sentence.

**Note: resist the temptation to tack extra words onto the sentences in the example above. Every time I use this example, people point out that “She was going to the party, but something came up” doesn’t mean the same thing as “She went to the party, but something came up”. That’s true, but those sentences aren’t the same as the ones in the example. In the example, the weak verb is unnecessary, irrelevant, and pointless. In the counterexample, the weak verb serves a useful purpose—it tells you that “something came up” *before she arrived at the party, rather than at the party itself. Weak verbs aren’t always bad. When they actually tell you something, you should leave them in the text.***

Take a look at the paragraphs below. I've put weak verbs in *italics*; other parts that could be tightened up are underlined:

It *was* 87 years ago when our fathers *were* creating, in North America, a country that *had* not existed before. The idea *was* that the country *would be* free, and the government *would believe that everybody was made the same way*.

Now we *are* fighting a great civil war, which *is* testing whether that country, or any other country that *was* created in the same way and that *had* a government which *believed the same thing, can* make it for very long. We *are* standing around on a big battlefield of the war I *was* just talking about. We *have* come here to mark a part of that battlefield as a graveyard for the people who *were* killed here so that the nation *would* not die. It *is* totally a good thing for us to *do* that.

Awful! The second sentence alone contains five weak verbs. Some sentences drag on for so long they barely make sense. Let's try knocking out some weak verbs and condense the language a little (we might make it more poetic at the same time):

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men *are* created equal.

Now we *are* engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, *can* long endure. We *are* met on a great battlefield of that war. We *have* come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that this nation *might* live. It *is* altogether fitting and proper that we *should do* this.

Much better. The number of weak verbs drops from 20 to 9, and the text uses fewer words overall. True, it could be condensed even more: *final resting-place* takes up more space than *graveyard*, and *four score and seven* takes up more than 87. But to change those phrases would reduce the beauty of the language.

In case you were wondering, this quotation is the first half of Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address". There are five versions of the speech, some of which use even fewer weak verbs than the text above. This version is carved on the wall of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C..

## Killing the Weasel

You already know to watch out for spelling mistakes and weak verbs—both are signs of sloppy writing, which is often accompanied by sloppy research. But how can you tell if someone has done thorough, reliable, trustworthy research—and then decided to lie about it?

This happens all the time. Politicians notoriously twist the truth—a fact is a fact, but what that fact means is open to interpretation. Arguing about the definition of the word "is" doesn't change the facts, it just changes the way people look at the facts.

Using language to affect the interpretation of truth is called "**weaseling**", and words used in this way are called "**weasel words**". Consider this sentence:

**I was going the speed limit.**

This sentence makes a definite point. It is either absolutely true or it's a lie. There's no middle ground. Now consider this sentence:

**I was going approximately the speed limit, give or take a bit, in a general sort of way, if you know what I mean.**

Approximately the speed limit? Give or take how much? If that's a general sort of way, can you be more specific? And no, I don't know what you mean. This sentence can't really be proven as a lie, because it's so mushy that it doesn't really mean anything at all.

Weasel words are most often used to cover up weak evidence. Examples of common weasel words: *many, most, few, often, frequently, basically* and *approximately*. Common weasel phrases: *in*

*general, more or less, by and large, sort of and kind of.* When you see these words or phrases, watch out! The author may be hiding something.

When writing your own papers, be as specific as you can, given the evidence you have. Sometimes the evidence compels you to be vague.

**We estimate there are 200 billion planets in the galaxy.**

**It is possible that Stanley Morgan actually said that, but, given the available testimony, it seems doubtful.**

Words and phrases like *estimate, it is possible, seems* and *doubtful* might be weasel words in another setting, but here they are used to show weaknesses in the evidence. Weasel words only count as weasels when they are trying to cover up the truth.

## Evidence

Finally, always remember to check your evidence. (Ideally, you should be doing this as you go along with your research, but check it after you finish writing, as well.)

- Are your sources reliable?
- Do they say what you think they say?
- Does the evidence make sense?
- Are they backed up by other sources? (Corroboration.)

After looking at the sources, look at the way you present those sources in your paper.

- Are your sources presented in a logical order?
- Does your paper flow naturally, with later paragraphs building upon earlier ones?
- Is your bibliography accurate?

Look for mistakes, not only in your own writing, but in other people's as well. Be skeptical of all writing, even that which comes from a respected source! (Except me.)

## Assignment 7

A made-up student submitted this research paper to me, and I gave them a made-up F, because the writing is terrible.

Rewrite the text of the paper to make it better. Get rid of as many weak verbs and weasel words as possible. (Assume that the evidence behind this paper is strong, so you can *always* eliminate a weasel word and transform a sentence into a definite statement.) As long as you convey the same information to the reader, you can rewrite the paper any way you like. Break up sentences! Rearrange paragraphs! Summarize!

- Use as few words as possible.
- Don't repeat yourself.
- Be specific. (Consult an encyclopedia for factual details you could work into the text.)
- Stick to the point; avoid irrelevant comments.
- Try to sound professional. (Hint: read your writing aloud when you finish typing it. Does it sound like something you might actually say in a formal presentation?)

The Fourth Crusade was not really a good idea because the people who were supposed to be fighting for the Pope were usually more interested in maybe making some money by possibly attacking some Christians along the way to Jerusalem, and everybody (more or less) had had enough of the Pope anyway. When the Crusade was beginning, around 1199, approximately zero people were interested. What would the Pope have done if no one was feeling good enough about his idea to want to get involved? That is an interesting question, which I might think about later, if I get around to it.

So, anyway, the Crusaders were a nasty bunch of people, and they were often fighting with one another even before the time when they got to Venice, which is where they were supposed to be sailing from, except for some of the others, who didn't. When they got to Venice they couldn't pay all the money they had said they would pay to the Venetians, so the Venetians said they would have to attack Zara, because the Venetians had owned Zara for a while and they wanted it back. The Crusaders did it because, like I said, they were a nasty bunch of people.

After they had conquered Zara they sailed around to Constantinople and conquered that city too, but first they sort of burned it down a bunch of times. (They didn't burn down all of it at once. They had accidentally burned down one part of it, so they decided they would burn down another part, and then they burned down another part after that. You know what I mean.) After they were done burning they raped and looted and pretty much destroyed everything. Basically, life kind of sucked.

The Fourth Crusade was bad because it was a bad idea and it was badly done. If the Crusaders had conquered Jerusalem the Crusade would have been a success, and then it wouldn't have been bad. But war is always bad, at least it's bad most of the time, so the Fourth Crusade was bad because it was a war. I think.

## Week 7 Quiz

1. Weasel words:
  - A. Dig burrows in sandbanks
  - B. Cover up the truth
  - C. Should be added to a paper whenever possible
  - D. None of the above
2. We cover editing in this class because:
  - A. Knowing how to edit can help you identify bad sources
  - B. Editing improves the strength of your argument
  - C. Editing helps you sort out your evidence so it makes sense
  - D. All of the above
3. Which of the following is NOT a weak verb?
  - A. Could
  - B. Might
  - C. Be
  - D. Make
4. When was the "Gettysburg Address" delivered?
  - A. July 4, 1776
  - B. November 19, 1863
  - C. December 8, 1941
  - D. September 11, 2001
5. Good writing:
  - A. Tastes good
  - B. Smells good
  - C. Sounds good
  - D. None of the above
6. In the following sentence, which word is a weasel?  
**"This quotation probably comes from the first book of the series."**
  - A. First
  - B. Quotation
  - C. Series
  - D. Probably
7. Weak verbs are sometimes called:
  - A. Auxiliary verbs
  - B. Fractious verbs
  - C. Verbose verbs
  - D. Soporific verbs
8. What's the last thing you should check when editing your paper?
  - A. Weak verbs
  - B. Weasel words

- C. Evidence
- D. Your coat

9. You should ALWAYS eliminate a weak verb, no matter how you have to twist the sentence to do it.

- TRUE
- FALSE

10. Do you feel that this class has helped you with researching and writing?

- A. Yes, I'm ready to work for the Congressional Research Service
- B. No, you're crazy, none of this stuff makes any sense
- C. Some of it was useful, but I need more practice
- D. What was the class about, again?
- E. \_\_\_\_\_

# Final Project

The final project is a 12-item bibliography. Just give me properly done, formal list of sources in MLA style; the sources do not have to be on the same topic, and you don't have to write an actual paper.

I want you to show a variety of different kinds of sources, not just a list of 12 websites. Your citations may come from any of the following types of sources, but **NO MORE THAN 4** from each category:

**Books**

Articles from print newspapers

Articles from print magazines or journals

Articles from databases

Websites

You may reuse citations from assignments earlier in the course.

The citations must be in **PERFECT MLA style**. Pages 129-135 in the *MLA Handbook* provide guidelines for putting together the bibliography.

Your final project **MUST BE TYPED!**

Remember to watch your indentation, punctuation, and capitalization of titles. Be sure to list your sources in alphabetical order. Don't forget dates or issue numbers!

# Course Evaluation

We revise INCO 1548 every year, as academic requirements change and new research tools become available. We'd like to ask your help in making this course the best possible. Please take a moment to answer a few questions.

1. How difficult was the course for you?

Too Easy

Easy

Manageable

Hard

Too Hard

2. Check off any topics you think we should spend more time on:

- Nothing, the course is perfect the way it is
- Outlining
- Plagiarism/Copyright Law
- Using websites
- Using periodicals
- Using databases
- Using libraries
- Editing
- Citation rules/MLA style
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you think we should spend LESS time on any of these things?

4. Do you think the course was useful?

4. Please offer any suggestions for improvements or changes:

# Informal Outline for a Research Paper

## Research Phase

Research statement: *Cats*

Subtopics to explore in the research:

1. *Biology of cats*
2. *Social behavior of cats*
3. *Impact of cats on people (compare pet owners with non pet owners)*

## Writing Phase

Thesis statement: *Cats are evil*

Supporting evidence:

1. *Cats eat all day and never pay for their food (Personal observation)*
2. *Recent research suggests cats are not fully domesticated (Driscoll et al.)*
3. ~~*Cats freak me out (More personal observations)*~~ REJECTED DUE TO PERSONAL BIAS

Conclusion:

1. *Eating food without paying for it is stealing*
2. *Stealing is evil*
3. *Therefore, cats are evil*

and

4. *If cats are not domesticated, then they are wild*
5. *Wild animals are not to be trusted*
6. *Untrustworthiness is evil*
7. *Therefore, cats are evil*

*The fact that cats are evil is conclusively demonstrated by their failure to pay for the food they consume, as well as their untrustworthy nature.*

## Editing Phase

Check the evidence:

1. *Are the sources reliable?*
2. *Do you have enough evidence?*

Check the logic:

1. *Does the evidence support your conclusion?*
2. *Are there other ways of looking at it?*

3. *Can you demonstrate that your interpretation of the evidence is more valid than others?*

Check the writing:

1. *Does your paper stick to the point?*
2. *Are you making your arguments clearly?*
3. *Is your spelling/grammar/citation style correct?*

# Fair Use Checklist

## PURPOSE

### *Favoring Fair Use*

- Teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use)
- Research
- Scholarship
- Nonprofit Educational Institution
- Criticism
- Comment
- News reporting
- Transformative or Productive use (changes the work for new utility)
- Restricted access (to students or other appropriate group)
- Parody

### *Opposing Fair Use*

- Commercial activity
- Profiting from the use
- Entertainment
- Bad-faith behavior
- Denying credit to original author

## NATURE

### *Favoring Fair Use*

- Published work
- Factual or nonfiction based
- Important to favored educational objectives

### *Opposing Fair Use*

- Unpublished work
- Highly creative work (art, music, novels, films, plays)
- Fiction

## AMOUNT

### *Favoring Fair Use*

- Small quantity
- Portion used is not central or significant to entire work
- Amount is appropriate for favored educational purpose

### *Opposing Fair Use*

- Large portion or whole work used
- Portion used is central to work or "heart of the work"

## EFFECT

### *Favoring Fair Use*

- User owns lawfully acquired or purchased copy of original work
- One or few copies made
- No significant effect on the market or potential market for copyrighted work
- No similar product marketed by the copyright holder
- Lack of licensing mechanism

### *Opposing Fair Use*

- Could replace sale of copyrighted work
- Significantly impairs market or potential market for copyrighted work or derivative
- Reasonably available licensing mechanism for use of the copyrighted work
- Affordable permission available for using work
- Numerous copies made
- You made it accessible on Web or in other public forum
- Repeated or long term use

"Copyright Management Center." *Indiana University*. Indiana University, 2006. Web. 22 Oct. 2007.

## Copyright Term and the Public Domain in the United States 1 January 2007

### UNPUBLISHED WORKS

| Type of Work   | Copyright Term  | What was in the public domain in the U.S. as of 1 January 2007 <sup>2</sup>  |
|--|---|--|
| Unpublished works  | Life of the author + 70 years   | Works from authors who died before 1937.                                     |
| Unpublished anonymous and pseudonymous works, and works made for hire (corporate authorship) | 120 years from date of creation   | Works created before 1887.   |
| Unpublished works created before 1978 that were published after 1977 but before 2003         | Life of the author + 70 years or 31 December 2047, whichever is greater | Nothing. The soonest the works can enter the public domain is 1 January 2048 |
| Unpublished works created before 1978 that were published after 31 December 2002             | Life of the author + 70 years   | Works of authors who died before 1937.                                       |
| Unpublished works when the death date of the author is not known <sup>3</sup>                | 120 years from date of creation <sup>4</sup>                            | Works created before 1887. <sup>4</sup>                                      |

### WORKS PUBLISHED IN THE US

| Date of Publication <sup>5</sup> | Conditions <sup>6</sup> | Copyright Term <sup>2</sup> |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Before 1923                      | None                    | In the public domain        |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 1923 through 1977   | Published without a copyright notice                             | In the public domain  |
| 1978 to 1 March 1989  | Published without notice, and without subsequent registration    | In the public domain  |
| 1978 to 1 March 1989  | Published without notice, but with subsequent registration       | 70 years after the death of author, or if work of corporate authorship, the shorter of 95 years from publication, or 120 years from creation <sup>2</sup> |
| 1923 through 1963   | Published with notice but copyright was not renewed <sup>2</sup> | In the public domain  |
| 1923 through 1963   | Published with notice and the copyright was renewed <sup>2</sup> | 95 years after publication date <sup>2</sup>  |
| 1964 through 1977   | Published with notice  | 95 years after publication date <sup>2</sup>  |
| 1978 to 1 March 1989  | Published with notice  | 70 years after death of author, or if work of corporate authorship, the shorter of 95 years from publication, or 120 years from creation <sup>2</sup>     |
| After 1 March 1989  | None   | 70 years after death of author, or if work of corporate authorship, the shorter of 95 years from publication, or 120 years from creation <sup>2</sup>     |
| WORKS PUBLISHED OUTSIDE THE US <sup>9</sup>   |  |   |
| Date of Publication   | Conditions   | Copyright Term in the United States   |
| Before 1 July 1909  | None   | In the public domain  |
| <i>Works Published Abroad Before 1978 in Compliance with US Formalities<sup>8</sup></i> |  |   |
| 1 July 1909 through 1922  | Published in compliance with US formalities                      | In the public domain  |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1923 through 1977   | Published with notice, and still in copyright in its home country as of 1 January 1996  | 95 years after publication date <sup>9</sup>  |
| <i>Works Published Abroad Before 1978 Without Compliance with US Formalities<sup>10</sup></i> |   |   |
| 1 July 1909 through 1922  | Published in a language other than English and without subsequent republication with a copyright notice   | In the 9 <sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, the same as for an unpublished work; in the rest of the US, likely to be in the public domain <sup>11</sup>            |
| 1923 through 1977   | In the public domain in its home country as of 1 January 1996   | In the public domain  |
| 1923 through 1977   | Published in a language other than English, without subsequent republication with a copyright notice, and not in the public domain in its home country as of 1 January 1996 | In the 9 <sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, the same as for an unpublished work; in the rest of the US, likely to be 95 years after publication date <sup>11</sup> |
| 1923 through 1977   | Published in English, without subsequent republication with a copyright notice, and not in the public domain in its home country as of 1 January 1996                       | 95 years after publication date <sup>9</sup>  |
| <i>Works Published Abroad After 1 January 1978</i>  |   |   |
| After 1 January 1978  | Copyright in the work in its home country has not expired by 1 January 1996   | 70 years after death of author, or if work of corporate authorship, the shorter of 95 years from publication, or 120 years from creation                        |
| <i>Special Cases</i>  |   |   |
| After 1 July 1909   | Created by a resident of Afghanistan, Bhutan, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Nepal, San Marino, and possibly Yemen, and published in one of  | Not protected by US copyright law because they are not party to   |

|                   |   |                                    |
|-------------------|---|------------------------------------|
|                   | these countries <sup>12</sup>   | international copyright agreements |
| After 1 July 1909 | Works whose copyright was once owned or administered by the Alien Property Custodian, and whose copyright, if restored, would as of January 1, 1996, be owned by a government <sup>13</sup> | Not protected by US copyright law  |

Hirtle, Peter B. "Copyright Term and the Public Domain in the United States." *Cornell Copyright Information Center*. Cornell University, 2 Jan. 2007. Web. 22 Oct. 2007.

## Judging Websites—Things to Look For

| AUTHORITY   | ACCURACY   | CURRENCY  |
|---|--|---|
| Author's name   | Details (does the information on the website include specific facts and statements which can be verified, or is it vague on important issues?) | Date of copyright/revision  |
| Author's qualifications or credentials  | Corroboration (does the information on the website match up with information from other sources?)  | Mention of recent events  |
| Contact information   | Bibliography (does the website list its sources?)  | RSS feed/email notification of updates (does the website offer to contact you whenever new information comes in?) |
| Top-level domain (.gov or .edu websites are generally more reliable than .org or .com; these in turn are more reliable than .net)                     | Presentation (does the website look well done and properly organized? Does the text sound professional?)                                       |   |
| Recommendation (Did another source recommend this website to you? Do books/websites/magazines/whatever include this website in their bibliographies?) | Peer Review  |   |
| Lack of bias (does the author of the website have an incentive to lie to you? If so, do they admit the incentive and try to overcome it?)             |  |   |

## Dewey Decimal and Library of Congress Systems

| Dewey Decimal System                                 | Library of Congress System                            |
|--|---|
| 000: Computer science, information and general works | A: General works                                      |
| 100: Philosophy and psychology                       | B: Philosophy, psychology, religion                   |
| 200: Religion  | C: Auxiliary sciences of history                      |
| 300: Social sciences                                 | D: World history                                      |
| 400: Language  | E,F: History of the Americas                          |
| 500: Science   | G: Geography, anthropology, recreation                |
| 600: Technology                                      | H: Social sciences                                    |
| 700: Arts and recreation                             | J: Political science                                  |
| 800: Literature                                      | K: Law  |
| 900: History and geography                           | L: Education  |
|  | M: Music  |
|  | N: Fine arts  |
|  | P: Language and literature                            |
|  | Q: Science  |
|  | R: Medicine   |
|  | S: Agriculture  |
|  | T: Technology   |
|  | U: Military science                                   |
|  | V: Naval science                                      |
|  | Z: Bibliography, library science, information science |